A Corpus-Driven Analysis of Image Construction of BRIC Bank from Mainstream Media's Perspective

—A Case Study of *China Daily*

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Despite the fact that BRIC Bank was instituted to enhance the core competitiveness of developing countries, opponents concern it would undermine the status of the World Bank and incurred negative impact. However, as China is one of initiated countries of the BRIC nations, domestic mainstream media witnessed widespread coverage to justify Bank's roles. Therefore, this paper, based on Halliday's Meta-language Function theory, intends to explore the significance of BRIC Banks from the perspective of domestic mainstream media. Meanwhile, the thesis, combining with corpus research tools and VRIN standard theory (namely Valuable, Rare, Imperfectly, Imitable, Non-Substitutable), probes into image construction and interprets roles of BRIC Bank in mainstream reports.

Keywords: BRIC bank, image, corpus, management

Introduction

In 2001, Jim O'Neill, an economist from Goldman Sachs, firstly proposed "BRICs" representing newly emerged market investors. The missions of BRIC nations are as follows: strengthen peace and development around the world; increase right of speech among developing countries; stimulate communication between developed and developing nations; benefit self-construction of BRIC nation. In 2012, BRICs came up with the idea of establishing BRIC Bank, mainly directing at building financial security network to prevent themselves from impact of unstable currency in next financial crisis and enhance competitiveness of developing nations when participating in international business. Thus, in order to investigate the significance of BRICs, this paper intends to interpret roles of BRIC Bank in the domestic mainstream reports.

Literature Review

There are several critical discourse analysis based on corpus, many of which deals with the construction of personal and national image. QIAN (2010) discusses the image construction of Osama Bin Laden via word frequency, cluster, collocation and concordance on the basis of corpus of *The sun*. YANG and WU (2012)

explore Chinese women's identity construction through *New York Times* corpus. Firstly, after entering key words *Chinese women*, quantitative and generalized characteristics of *Chinese women* phenomenon can be recognized; secondly, metaphors and quantifiers elucidate *New York Times* holds exclusionary, negative and threatening tone towards *Chinese Women*. Furthermore, the thesis explores semantic styles of reports by word frequency, clusters and concordance.

In reality, a large sum of research utilized corpus to elicit data and conduct qualitative analysis. ZHANG (2014) observes words collocation and concordance of "North Korea" to discover semantic prosody in the coverage of *New York Times*. Additionally, ZHU (2012) establishes *New York Times* Corpus and regards "China" as key word to retrieve highly frequent collocation and concordance with other words. Combining context with relevant political and economic analysis, he concludes attitudes towards China presented by *New York Times*. When it comes to Brics Bank, on the threshold of its establishment, its role and impact are eye-catching. Therefore, how to convince general public with a positive image constitutes the main concern of mainstream media. Thus, this paper also adopts similar research pattern to analyze data through word frequency, collocation and concordance. Certainly, political and economic factors are also considered to interpret the data by means of "VRIN" model.

Halliday's Meta-language Function Theory

Ideational Function

Ideational Function, "as a way of representing patterns of experience, enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of what goes on around them and inside them" (Halliday, 2000, p. 106). From this perspective, "the grammatical system by which this is achieved is Transitivity. The Transitivity system construes the world of experience into a manageable set of process types" (Halliday, 2000, p. 106). According to Halliday's interpretation, "A process consists, in principle, of three components: the process itself; participants in the process; circumstances associated with the process" (Halliday, 1994, p. 107). Halliday listed six types of processes, namely, material process, mental process, relational process, behavioral process, verbal process, and existential process.

The Interpersonal Function

> The clause is also organized as an interactive event involving speaker, or writer, and audience. In the act of speaking, the speaker adopts for himself a particular speech role, and in so doing assigns to the listener a complementary role which he wishes him to adopt in his turn. (Halliday, 2000, p. 68)

Thus, Interpersonal Function arises to enact social relationships between author and reader, and reflects writer's attitude towards subject (Halliday, 2000). The principle grammatical system is Mood (Halliday, 2000), representing speaker's judgment or evaluation.

The Textual Function

Textual function, regarding clause as message, refers to a mechanism inherent in language, which creates relevance to context (Halliday, 2000). Textual function is mainly achieved through thematic structure.

> The clause is organized as a message by having a special status assigned to one part of it. One element in the clause is enunciated as the theme; this then combines with the remainder so that the two parts together constitute a message. (Halliday, 2000, p. 37)

Theme is the body of the message, in the first place position.

> Theme as a starting point information is usually a noun phrase (noun words), adverbial phrases or prepositional phrases. The rest of the message is called rhyme, representations thematic sections. Sentence thematic choice have a major impact on the organization of discourse. (Halliday, 1985, p. 38)

Data Collection

In terms of corpus analysis, this paper utilizes sub-category of Business Media Corpus—BMCCD (Business Media Corpus of *China Daily*), which covers all the news report of Business part in *China Daily*. Firstly, "Brics" is calculated 183 times in BMCCD. Considering the fact that Brics Development Bank may be expressed as "Brics Bank" or "Brics Development Bank", it is more feasible to count both and the total amount is 46 times dispersed in 19 news, accounting for 25.1% in all economic reports of Brics. Also it is noted that Brics Bank's initial appearance is in June, and its coverage is intensive in August with frequency culminating during the period of its establishment. Additionally, for the sake of obtaining concise and accurate data, a new corpus called BDBC (Brics Development Bank Corpus) is created with the information of "Brics Bank" or "Brics Development Bank". Therefore, when "Bank" is input in BDBC, it generally represents Brics Development Bank, and some phrases related with other Bank instead of Brics Development Bank are precluded, so the result demonstrates collocation and concordance related to Brics Development Bank.

Research Findings

Transitive Analysis

Discourse indicates speaker's attitude and ideology in a latent manner. Thus, it is of great significance to elaborate discrete elements in news report in order to probe into image of Brics Development Bank constructed by Chinese media. This part firstly analyzes discourse in detail from the perspective of transitivity.

In BDBC Corpus, apart from functional and auxiliary vocabulary, etc., first 30 words collocating with "bank" are sorted by frequency as below in Table 1.

Table 1

Image Construction of Brics Bank

Rank	Words	L	R	Total
1	brics	47	8	55
2	development	45	8	53
3	world	39	1	40
4	new	21	9	30
5	bank	11	11	22
6	China	5	13	18
7	Headquarter(ed/s)	6	12	18
8	Shanghai	4	12	16
9	Infrastructure	13	3	16
10	Asian	11	5	16
11	investment	10	3	13
12	head	1	7	8
13	international	4	3	7
14	entrants	0	7	7

(Table 1 continued)

Rank	Words	L	R	Total
15	central	6	1	7
16	summit	3	3	6
17	fund	2	4	6
18	countries	3	3	6
19	billion	4	2	6
20	poverty	2	2	4
21	monetary	2	2	4
22	members	2	2	4
23	launched	0	4	4
24	global	3	1	4
25	establishment	4	0	4
26	creation	3	1	4
27	capital	1	3	4
28	supplement	1	2	3
29	set	0	3	3
30	rivals	3	0	3

Since such collocations like "brics", "development", "world", "China" in the list are regular collocation of "bank", there is no need to further elaborate its inherent relationship with Brics Development Bank. Also, some words listed above bear no relation with establishment of bank after skimming its whole sentence. Thus, these words are cancelled as well. As a result of detailed scanning, 17 diverse collocations are listed as follow: new, headquarter(ed/s), Shanghai, infrastructure, entrants, summit, countries, billion, poverty, members, launched, establishment, creation, capital, supplement, set, and rivals. These words can be further classified as four categories: (1) vocabulary concerning establishment of Bank: launched, establishment, creation, summit, set; (2) vocabulary concerning headquarter of Bank: headquarter(ed/s), Shanghai; (3) vocabulary concerning properties of Bank: new, entrants, supplement, rivals; (4) vocabulary concerning functions of Bank: infrastructure, countries, billion,poverty, members, capital. Since "headquarter" just represents Shanghai without further implication, vocabulary concerning headquarter of Bank will not be involved in the following discussion.

First of all, in view of vocabulary concerning establishment of Bank like "launch" and "set", these words forecast that Bricss Development Bank is bound to be set up, and their sentences indicate material process, which aim to objectively deliver incidence. For instance, a piece of news titled "*Brics development Bank set to become a reality*" (JIANG, 2014, June 4, *China Daily*), manifests that Bank will be established, and "set" indicates its establishment is on agenda. Additionally, "establishment" and "creation" all refer to foundation of Bank. The sentences containing "establishment" are related to material process while those involving "creation" have mental process. "Oxfam believes that the creation of a development bank offers a real and concrete opportunity for the governments of BRICS countries"(Kevin, 2014, July 23, *China Daily*). This sentence, of which "Oxfam" is the senser, attaches more emphasis on senser's attitudes towards establishment of Bank, boosting image construction of Bank by justifying the viewpoint that Brics Development Bank offer opportunities for the development of Brics nations.

Secondly, several words with high frequency like "new", "entrants", "supplement", "rivals" are in news coverage, and "rivals "is a negative word. For instance, "New multilateral development banks will not be rivals of

the World Bank Group, according to its head" (LAN & ZHU, 2014, July 9, *China Daily*), can be treated as verbal process. The sayer is the leader of World Bank, making justification for Brics Development Bank by stating clearly "New multilateral development banks will not be rivals of the World Bank Group". In news report, direct speech of authority strengthens reliability of news and can alter public attitudes.

> Psaki…was clearly viewing the two proposed new institutions as rivals to the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. It is true that the proposed BRICS bank could be interpreted to some extent as a reflection of frustration by emerging countries that they are not equally represented in international financial institutions. (LAN & ZHU, 2014, July 9, *China Daily*)

Preceding part of this paragraph involves verbal process, reflecting Psaki's negative standpoint towards Bank. On the other hand, the rest part elucidates that due to unjust treatment inflicted by international financial organizations on newly emerged nations, a new institution needs to be initiated to remedy such prejudice. Thereby, Brics Development Bank still maintain its positive image in the whole picture.

"The bank, which will be more suitable to the actual circumstances of developing countries, will become a good supplement to the World Bank"(JIANG, 2014, June 4, *China Daily*). "World Bank head says new entrants 'will be welcome'"(LAN & ZHU, 2014, July 9, *China Daily*).

The above two utterances all display verbal process. Direct speeches, manifesting authentic property of news, strongly verify the point that Brics Development Bank finds more proper in accelerating the pace of developing countries and acts as supplementary role to World Bank, waiting to be supported by general public. In reality, authority's judgement plays a leading role in modeling public standpoint. It can be concluded that In order to construct Bank's active role, domestic media not only refers to objective style of coverage, but also utilize authority's opinion to justify their perspective.

Thirdly, in terms of vocabulary concerning functions of Bank such as "infrastructure", "countries", "billion", "poverty", "members", "capital", ect., the reasons accounted for high frequency of these words can be elicited with the reference to the Bank's significance. Since American financial crisis broke out, for the purpose of averting unstable impact of currency from the following financial crisis and relieving dependence on dollars and euros, Brics nations have been planning to institute a joint security network, functioning as currency reserve in case of urgency. Meanwhile, Bank will aid infrastructure construction. From above-mentioned roles of Bank, the frequently-appeared words demonstrate Bank's roles to some extent. More specifically, they are key words of Bank's functions. Furthermore, the discourse containing these words are mostly related to material process, which displays objective coverage to convince readers to construct a positive image of Bank.

From the prospective of Transitivity, semantic prosody embodied in Brics Development Bank is positive and affirmative. As China is a crucial member of Brics nations, domestic media not only conform to objective principle of coverage, but also support national interest and standpoint. Thereby, coverage tends to be positive, but it's within reasonable limit via relatively objective discourse instead of distorting truth.

Mood Analysis

Halliday considered that Interpersonal Function is achieved through Mood system, emphasizing speakers' recognition and attitudes. And In in the following analysis, modal auxiliaries like "can", "will", "must", "should" are principal objects to be discussed (see Table 2). It can be seen that modal auxiliaries vary in different periods

and purposes, and further elaboration on these discourse will provide an integrated picture of the image-constructed process.

Table 2

Modal Auxiliaries Usage

Rank	Words	L	R	Total
1	will	2	27	29
2	should	0	3	3
3	may	0	3	3
4	likely	3	0	3
5	would	0	2	2
6	could	0	2	2
7	can	0	2	2

The ranking of collocation with "bank" is demonstrated as above. "will" is the most frequent collocation, and its sentences can be classified as three categories: (1) the roles and impacts of Bank; (2) attitudes towards Bank; (3) establishment of Bank.

"bank will await approval by the countries' legislation" (JIANG, 2014, June 4, *China Daily*). "will" indicates Bank is about to be founded. News titled "*BRICS Development Bank set to become a reality*" (JIANG, 2014, June 4, *China Daily*) also informs public of incoming Bank to unveil its initial appearance.

"The bank, which will be more suitable to the actual circumstances of developing countries, will become a good supplement to the World Bank"(JIANG, 2014, June 4, *China Daily*). China Daily regards Brics Development Bank as a supplementary role to World Bank, giving affirmative remark to its place in economy and politics.

"World Bank head says new entrants 'will be welcome'"(LAN & ZHU, 2014, July 9, *China Daily*). "new entrants" refers to Brics Development Bank. Initially, international voice turns to be suspicious, worrying it will constitute a "rival" to World Bank. However, World Bank head recognizes its bright side and welcomes its establishment to mitigate public suspicion. Another example like "New multilateral development banks will not be rivals of the World Bank Group" (LAN & ZHU, 2014, July 9, *China Daily*) also demonstrates same standpoint. Meanwhile, same discourse actually reoccurs five times in *China Daily*, which is devoted to eliminating negative side of Bank.

Apart from "will", "should" is also a vital word occurring three times. Discourse with "should" all strengthens the significance of Bank that it aims to alleviate property and enhance infrastructure construction and sustainable development in developing countries. "should" endows Bank with responsibility to justify its contributions to more welfare of developing countries.

Social Context Analysis

According to above corpus analysis of Bank's construction, news coverage generally emphasizes its complementary role to World Bank instead of supplementary or rival relation. Meanwhile, the following analysis probes into reasons on the basis of VRIN model from the perspective of management. VRIN refers to four properties, namely, Valuable, Rare, Imperfectly Imitable, Non-Substitutable. The following discussion deals with Brics Development Bank's strength in current situation from these four dimensions.

Valuable refers to valuable assets, a prerequisite for an entity to devise its strategies and enhance efficacy. World Bank, differentiated with Brics Development Bank, aims to alleviate poverty in backward regions, safeguard female interest, preserve historic and cultural assets as well as treat ailment, while international aid and country development are small proportion of World Bank responsibility (WANG, 2014). Worse still, World Bank sets strict standard for loans with cumbersome procedure. Fortunately, Brics Development Bank offers more simplified and efficient policy to offset World Bank's shortcoming, facilitating favorable development of Brics nations.

Rare refers to rare resource that enhance core competency of an entity. Brics nations advocate multipolar world without western participants. Its establishment is based on joint economic and politic interest of Brics nations, which is more aligned with development needs of developing countries.

Imperfectly Imitable refers to hardly imitable resource, indicating an entity of unique history, vague origin and social responsibility. Non-Substitutable refers to hardly replaced resource. Generally, developed countries control speech right in World Bank and their rules may find inappropriate in emerging countries. Therefore, Brics Development Bank finds its unique place in constituting security network for Brics nations. In fact, Brics Development Bank helps emerging market to establish its own risk regulation and control system in accordance with its developing stage (CHENG, 2014), which constitutes an indispensable and unique role of Brics Bank. It also coincides with image constructed by media that distinguishes Brics Development Bank from World Bank.

Conclusion

This paper applies corpus to elicit frequency and concordance of collocations and concludes that Brics Development Bank portrayed by *China Daily* possesses positive semantic tendency. During transitive analysis, verbal and material process all demonstrate that Bank is bound to benefit developing countries. Despite negative judgment, *China Daily* still justifies that Bank is a blessing instead of a curse. On the other hand, VRIN model briefly elaborates core competency of Brics Development Bank, further elucidating positive and unique role of Bank. Additionally, modal auxiliaries are analyzed to verify that Bank is conducive to emerging market.

Certainly, limitations can be found in inadequate samples of news since the corpus only contains coverage of *China Daily* in 2014.And scope of study can be extended to other domestic media. Moreover, analysis can be further with the combination between corpus and VRIN modal.

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